

## **REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS/PROPOSALS (RFQ)**

The Huron County Board of Commissioners will be receiving Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from qualified Consultants to perform necessary functions related to its PY2025 Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program (CHIP). Scope of work includes the development of a grant application, convening the Huron County Housing Advisory Committee as required for the grant application, preparing an environmental review record, carrying out a fair housing program, performing residential property inspections (including lead-based paint risk assessments & clearances), overseeing pest inspections, and administration and implementation of the CHIP Grant.

All such proposals must be responsive to the scope of services section of this RFQ and must complete and meet the criteria outlined herein. Responses to this RFQ will be used to select qualified consultants to perform the required grant writing, planning, and grant administration assistance needed by Huron County. These services are financed with federal Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and administered by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD).

Since Huron County is seeking a professional service which may be available from several qualified consultants, the County elected to follow the competitive negotiation method of procurement outlined in 2 CFR 200.317. Under this method, the County will receive qualifications and proposals from interested consultants until the designated date and time listed below.

The Huron County Board of Commissioners reserves the right to reject all proposals and to negotiate various details of the proposals with the parties which have submitted them. If the County does negotiate any aspect of the proposals with any of the parties, it will provide all parties with an opportunity to negotiate on the same point. The County reserves the right to select the specific issues on which it will negotiate and will not negotiate any issues other than those it selects.

### **Purpose of Request for Qualifications:**

A contract will be executed between the selected consultant and Huron County for the duration necessary to fulfill all the CHIP Program requirements. The consultant will complete the outlined project work under the County's supervision. The State CHIP grant application must be submitted to ODOD by the established deadline, which, based on recent years, is expected to be June 20, 2025. All CHIP activities must be completed by February 28, 2029.

As this is a competitive grant, ODOD has not yet determined the County's PY2025 CHIP grant award, but it is estimated to be approximately \$1,050,000, with additional local matching funds. Consultants must submit a work plan outlining how the consultant will address each element of ODOD's CHIP requirements with their proposal.

## **CONTENT OF PROPOSAL:**

The County will review and evaluate the statements of qualifications filed based on the following content.

- a. Date the consultant's business was established and brief history of the organization.
- b. Experience statement indicating experience specific to Huron County and the Cities of Norwalk and Willard as it relates to Housing Services.
- c. Detailed Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program experience.
- d. Experience or technical expertise of the consultant and its personnel in connection with federal and state program requirements, specifically as they relate to administrative, financial, and monitoring requirements of the CDBG, HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and other federal and state housing programs.
- e. Experience in carrying out lead-based paint risk assessments and lead clearances on single family residential properties.
- f. Project references related to the above business areas.
- g. A cost proposal clearly detailing the total lump sum fixed costs for the various project tasks to be completed during the contract period. The fixed fee will include all costs for travel, postage, printing, photographs, and other expenses relating to the completion of the project.

## **SCOPE OF SERVICES:**

Interested consultants should provide the County with the following scope of service information:

### **A. Planning Process**

Assist the County with a community planning process that addresses the requirements outlined in the CHIP application instructions issued by the Office of Community Enhancement (OCE). At a minimum, this includes preparing and submitting the Planning Requirements Table with the following elements:

1. Complete a Community Services Resource Guide for the service area. The comprehensive community services guide must provide information and referral agency contact information, service area, name of program and services provided by the agency, and identification of the population served.
2. Undertake research and assessment. Answer OCE questions regarding the service area's housing needs and community service collaboration.
3. Develop final recommendations for the CHIP program application. Indicate each CHIP Program-eligible activity requesting funding, describe the level of need for each activity and the rationale for applying or not, and apply for the specific activities in the PY2025 CHIP program application.

### **B. CHIP Application Preparation**

Prepare and apply to the Ohio Department of Development OCE for funding under the PY2025 CHIP Program. The CHIP application will be consistent with the County's community housing priority needs and stakeholder recommendations. The application will be completed and electronically submitted via Ohio Community and Energy Assistance Network (OCEAN) no later than the OCE designated due date. All required public hearings, tables, narratives, attachments, signatures, and sign offs will be completed as part of the application process.

**C. CHIP Program Design, Administration, Fair Housing and Program Implementation**

a. **Program Design:** Consultant will utilize existing procedures and criteria which will enable proper administration and implementation for all anticipated or potential funded activities, home repairs and/or housing rehabilitation for both owners and renters, lead based paint hazard reduction with temporary relocation, where applicable, and tenant based rental assistance.

**b. Administration:**

1. Coordinate all administrative tasks with the County's appropriate department personnel.
2. Complete Tier 1 environmental review.
3. Establish outreach procedures.
4. Set recipient qualifications criteria and priority rating scale.
5. Establish grant limits.
6. Determine family income criteria to determine grant qualifications.
7. Establish contractor application procedure.
8. Establish contractor minimum qualifications.
9. Determine bidding procedures.
10. Establish inspection procedures.
11. Establish installation and materials specifications.
12. Design (or implement electronically, as required) necessary forms for application, qualifications, data collection, inspection documentation, loan determination, construction payments and drawdowns.
13. Maintain fiscal accounting procedures necessary to assure proper expenditure of and accounting for funds received.

**c. Fair Housing:**

1. Conduct all fair housing trainings as detailed in the Fair Housing Table, submitted as part of the CHIP application.
2. Complete all outreach and distribution of fair housing literature as detailed in the Fair Housing Table, submitted as part of the CHIP application.
3. Assure the County that all CHIP fair housing commitments and requirements have been met.

**d. Program Implementation:**

1. Promote the program throughout the project area and to eligible applicants using any marketing methods necessary.
2. Assist interested households in applying for CHIP assistance.
3. Maintain contact with other resources and coordinate in obtaining non-CHIP funds, where possible.
4. Recruit and screen qualified contractors for participation.
5. Rank and select applicants for assistance based on all current HUD, and local polices.
6. Perform on-site inspections of homes to determine structural deficiencies.
7. Determine improvements that can be provided within program limits and maximum grant levels or loan payment ceilings.
8. Develop cost estimates for work to be performed.
9. Package bid information for the homeowner including work specifications.
10. Serve as liaison between owner and contractors, including technical assistance during bidder's on-site visit, bid opening, bid award, and pre-construction conferences.
11. Prepare necessary paperwork to close loans, authorize grants, execute HOME written agreements for HOME funded projects, prepare draw-down for funds from the OCE, perform project set-up in OCEAN, and complete construction contracts for signature by owner and contractor.
12. Issue written orders to begin construction.
13. Initiate client files to document income eligibility, construction grant transactions, and construction close out.
14. Supervise construction and perform inspections of work in progress.
15. Approve equipment and materials to be installed to comply with program specifications.
16. Approve changes in construction; obtain owner and contractor written agreement for changes.
17. Conduct or contract for lead assessments and clearances for applicable CHIP activities.
18. Recruit lead abatement contractors/supervisors to perform evaluation and lead hazard reduction, consistent with the HUD Guidelines for the evaluation and treatment of lead-based paint in housing.
19. Coordinate rehabilitation/repairs with the Ohio Historic Preservation Office.
20. Approve requests for payment and when needed, obtain owner's written approval.
21. File all mortgages with the County Recorder.
22. File all completed documents and maintain records consistent with all HOME, CDBG and Ohio Housing Trust Fund (OHTF) requirements.
23. Report project progress to the County and its CHIP partners on a quarterly basis.
24. Provide necessary relocation services and financial assistance for CHIP clients in compliance with HUD and/or OCE requirements.

## **D. Regulatory Issues: General Program and Construction**

- a. **General Program Regulations:** All activities to be undertaken shall be performed in compliance with the following regulations, as applicable:
1. HOME-funded activities: Current edition of the HUD HOME rules.
  2. CDBG-funded activities: Current edition of the HUD Community Development Block Grant program.
  3. Ohio Housing Trust Fund activities: Current OHTF rules and regulations.
  4. Equal Opportunity and Fair Housing: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.
  5. Section 3 of the US Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, as amended.
  6. Executive orders 11625 and 12432 for Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and 12138 for Women's Business Enterprise (WBE) outreach and recruitment. Every effort will be made to encourage the use of MBE/WBE contractors and suppliers in the rehabilitation program. The project administrator will maximize participation through widespread and targeted marketing and public relations.
  7. Environmental reviews: Conduct individual project compliance reviews, including consultation with the Ohio Historical Preservation Office (OHPO).
  8. Labor standards requirements under 24 CFR 92.354, when applicable. Davis-Bacon requirements, however, are not applicable to client residential.
  9. Lead Paint requirements, per 24 CFR 92.355. HUD regulations for Lead-based Paint Hazard Reduction in Low Income Housing.
  10. 24 CFR 92.356 rules regarding conflict of interest.
  11. 24 CFR 92.357 rules regarding debarment and suspension.
  12. 24 CFR 92.359 regarding executive Order 12372 - Intergovernmental review.
  13. OCD Housing Handbook, including all ODOD policy notices.
  14. 24 CFR 92.351 Affirmative Marketing.
- b. **Construction Standards:** The OCE Residential Rehabilitation Standards (RRS) will be the primary guidelines for the preparation of rehabilitation specifications for individual homes. Each house rehabilitated with CHIP funds will meet the RRS Standards. In addition, the following construction standards shall be adhered to where applicable to rehabilitation or new construction:
1. Residential Code of Ohio
  2. Ohio Building Code
  3. Ohio Plumbing Code
  4. Ohio Mechanical Code
  5. National Electric Code (NFPA 70)
  6. International Energy Conservation Code
  7. International Fuel Gas Code
  8. Applicable local building codes or zoning requirements
  9. County Board of Health, Premises Sanitation Regulations

- E. Post Grant Management:** The County shall be responsible for activities which are identified as post-grant management requirements.
- F. Monitoring and Recordkeeping:** The County shall be responsible for activities which are identified as monitoring and record-keeping requirements.

**PROPOSAL EVALUATION:**

The County will evaluate the proposal based on a point system. The following represent the key factors which will be considered, and the points assigned to each:

- A. Experience with Federal/State compliance: 30 Points
- B. Consultant's CHIP specific experience: 30 Points
- C. Qualifications of key personnel: 25 Points
- D. County discretionary points: 15 Points

Negotiations will begin with the top candidate selected. If negotiations are not successful, the process will begin again with the candidate rated second and so on. Upon completion of successful negotiations, a contract will be executed with the County.

Consultants are invited to submit their response to the RFQ in a sealed envelope. One original and one copy of your response are to be received no later than 4:00 p.m., March 6, 2025:

Huron County Commissioners

Attn: Ms. Vickie Ziemba, Administrator/Clerk

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Norwalk, OH 44857